



10 TOP TIPS FOR TALKING TO THE MEDIA

1. When contacted by the media or public to arrange an interview or speaking opportunity, familiarise yourself with relevant Key Messaging Documents and Media Releases, as well as facts about your activity. Let Fiona know too, she can help you prepare or answer any queries you may have before you are interviewed. Email Fiona on community@blackdogride.com.au
2. It is OK to share your personal experience about mental illness or suicide, but only if you are comfortable doing so. It's ok to tell a journalist or member of the public that you're unable to answer a question about your own lived experiences with mental illness or suicide.
3. If you speak to the public about a specific suicide, never ever reveal the method or location of the suicide. This can trigger trauma in people and sometimes promote copycat behaviour.
4. Never refer to the act of suicide as "committing suicide". Suicide is not a crime anymore! Referring to suicide as a crime contributes to stigmatizing mental illness. Describe the act of suicide as "he took his life" or "she suicided."
5. Avoid words that suggests a lack of quality of life for people with mental illness. For example: referring to someone with a mental illness as a 'victim', 'suffering from' or 'afflicted with' a mental illness. These words stigmatize mental illness and leave the impression that there can be no quality of life for people who have a mental illness. Use phrases such as - a person is 'being treated for' mental illness, or 'someone with' a mental illness. Remember, the person comes before the illness.
6. Avoid phrases and words that sensationalise suicide, such as "suicide epidemic". Instead uses phrases such as: 'higher rates', 'increasing rates', 'concerning rates' of suicide.
7. When finishing a conversation where you've spoken about mental illness or suicide, let people know that they can contact Lifeline 24/7 on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467. There are more mental health and crisis services on the Black Dog Ride website:
www.blackdogride.com.au/crisis-support
8. When talking about Black Dog Ride, always refer to us as Black Dog Ride. Not Black Dog. Likewise, when talking about our riders, refer to them as Black Dog Riders, not Black Doggers. There are several organisations using the "black dog" metaphor for depression in their name and you must to be absolutely clear about who you are representing. Black Dog Ride may also be initialized as "BDR". The naming convention to use when talking about this ride is "Black Dog Ride to the Top End 2018" or just "Top End 2018".
9. Remember that Black Dog Ride supports a diverse range of individuals and families, so be aware of your behaviour and use appropriate language and clothing when representing Black Dog Ride.
10. Ask journalists or the public for a copy of any interviews, media or photos, whether it's via paper or radio or TV. Journalists are happy to email interviewees with these and won't feel put out if you ask. Share media directly with Fiona e: community@blackdogride.com.au so they can be shared with the wider Black Dog Ride community and uploaded Black Dog Ride's website and social media channels. This keeps the conversations flowing and the awareness amplifying long after your activity is over!